

Envision Carlsbad Citizens Committee

Minutes

March 9, 2011

1635 Faraday Avenue, Carlsbad
Room 173B

Committee Present

Primary Members

Eric Larsen (Chair)	Jim Farley (Vice-Chair)	Diane Proulx
Mike Howes	Jeannie Sprague-Bentley	Sean Bentley
Barbara Hamilton	Fred Sandquist	Robert Gates
Allen Sweet	Jeff Segall	John O'Reilly
Gina McBride		

Alternate Members

Jack Cumming	Tina Schmidt
Guy Roney	

Absent: Kirk Cowles (Primary), Jim Comstock (Primary), Greg Nelson (Primary), Glen Etherington (Alternate), Chris Korogi (Alternate), Sean Sexton (Alternate), Robert Nielsen (Alternate), Dr. Anne Spacie (Alternate), Julie Baker (Primary), Jim Bradley (Alternate)

City of Carlsbad Staff

Gary Barberio – Community & Economic Development Director
David de Cordova – Principal Planner
Chris DeCerbo – Principal Planner
Jennifer Jesser – Senior Planner
Rachel McGuire – Community Coordinator
John Kim – Associate Engineer
Doug Bilse – Senior Civil Engineer
Barbara Nedros – Administrative Assistant

Consultant

Rajeev Bhatia – Dyett & Bhatia
Sherry Ryan – Fehr & Peers
Mark Peterson – Fehr & Peers

Public/other attendees – There were five members of the public present

Eric Larsen called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

The minutes from the last meeting, January 26, 2011, were presented to the Committee for adoption. Jim Farley made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Jim Comstock seconded. The minutes were approved as presented.

Eric Larsen turned the meeting over to Rajeev Bhatia to give the Committee an overview of Working Paper #5 – Walking, Biking, Public Transportation and Connectivity.

Rajeev explained to the Committee that the Working Papers were designed to stimulate discussion and are not final plans for any documents. They are meant to guide dialogue and discussion.

Rajeev indicated that Sherry Ryan and Mark Peterson from Fehr & Peers would be walking the Committee through the details of the Working Paper.

Sherry reviewed the information on pedestrian movement, bicycle movement, transit, traffic circulation, and McClellan-Palomar Airport contained in the document; and gave an overview of issues that were found in Carlsbad regarding pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

A summary of the Committee's discussion on the different topics of Working Paper #5 is attached to the minutes.

Eric Larsen adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

ENVISION CARLSBAD CITIZENS' COMMITTEE
Working Paper #5 – Walking, Biking, Public Transportation and Connectivity
Discussion Notes

Conversation #1

Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Enhancements

Question #1: How can pedestrian circulation be enhanced?

Question #2: How can bicycle circulation be enhanced?

Question #3: How can safety, particularly for bicyclists and pedestrians, be improved?

- Recommend the City look at the SDG&E power line easements. The easements are wide enough to provide opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connections
- SDG&E may not be willing to grant access
- Boardwalk across the Buena Vista Lagoon to the Audubon Preserve
- Federal Uniform traffic control manual assumes motorists will look for bicyclists and avoid them. The idea of putting bicycles on safe side of parked cars may not be permitted
- Most bike traffic is along the coast
- Bicyclists are using Carlsbad Blvd because the view is better
- How do we get regular citizens to use bike lanes for running errands? Most people are doing it for recreation and not saving car trips
- Are we trying to relieve car trips or are we trying to have access for bicyclists? Traffic calming along Carlsbad Blvd and Palomar Airport Road may be good. Have shuttles along the roads to bring people to different locations. Change speed limit along roads in those particular areas
- Alga Road has no sidewalk or crosswalks. We should complete our sidewalks and make that a priority.
- What is the reality of building 100 miles of sidewalk?
- There are a lot of areas where sidewalks are appropriate and completing them would be important
- Wouldn't support more concrete sidewalks if we don't do something about run-off.
- Some neighborhoods favor the rural look and have opted not to have sidewalks (i.e., Highland Avenue).
- Cycling is fantastic in Carlsbad.
- Palomar Airport road is dangerous for cyclists.
- California has a basic speed law. Need to keep speed limits at 85% of what motorists are driving at.
- Is the value of the rail trail being over-stated? Is it worth the cost?

- Most bicyclists are going to choose to ride on Carlsbad Blvd rather than the rail trail; the rail trail won't alleviate bike traffic on Carlsbad Blvd.
- If the rail trail started in Oceanside and went down through Carlsbad you would probably find that more people would use it
- The rail trail would most likely be used by families because it would be safe
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- Do people feel safe and comfortable on Carlsbad trails? Are there barriers to people using trails, like no restroom facilities?
- Use of trails creates car trips. People drive to get to the trails.
- It is not practical to cycle to and from work. Large employers could offer some incentives for employees to bike to work
- Topography in Carlsbad discourages biking and walking to work.
- Higher density around employment areas may encourage walking and biking to work
- What is the goal of the master plan (pedestrian, trails, etc.)? Are they just out there because people want them? *Gary Barberio responded telling the Committee that there are three plans the City has, the Trails Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan and a Bicycle Master Plan. They lay out the ultimate network of what the City hopes to see, both existing and what is proposed, and there is prioritization of segments (connectivity) where we want to focus our efforts first. One reason we have the plans is because they are a requirement to qualify for State and Federal funds to build those facilities.*
- People want an integrated approach to trails, bike routes, etc. They want the availability of the trails, bike routes, etc.; they may not fully use them but they want them there
- What is the objective we are trying to achieve? What are the indicators of success?
- The railroad and freeway are barriers to pedestrians and cyclists traveling east/west; I-5 widening is an opportunity to get crossings over/under freeway and maybe railroad.

Conversation #2

Public Transit and Land Use Integration

Question 1: How can transit service be made more effective and potentially expanded? What should the City's role be?

Question 2: How can land use/transit connections be fostered?

- NCTD has begun a series of public hearings regarding proposed route changes
- Public transit is not time-effective, need shorter and more connections to be able to get to destinations
- People do not use transit because it is not convenient
- Transit system creates barriers to its own use
- If we encourage higher density, it will affect transit plans and amount of transit service; density and transit are interrelated.

- Transit service is focused on the choice rider
- Right now there is not a good transit system in North County; we don't have a choice for good transit, so we don't choose it as a travel option
- Need to consider high tourist season and how it impacts transit service.
- Supportive of having shuttles to Legoland, other tourist destinations, and employment areas.
- Need shuttles from Coaster to places of work.
- How would we facilitate a shuttle system?
- If density of business reaches a critical point, that makes alternative transportation options cost effective;
- Have companies buy transportation (shuttles) as an alternative to parking spaces
- We are going to have more seniors, but we don't have good public transit for seniors. We need some kind of shuttle system on demand throughout our community

Conversation #3

Cars, Complete Streets, and Measuring Systemwide Performance

Question 1: How can regional freeway access be improved?

Question 2: How should transportation performance be measured?

Question 3: How should various travel modes be balanced on city streets to achieve "complete streets"?

Question 4: Should the city support regional transportation demand management efforts to reduce dependence on (and subsidy of) the private, single-occupant vehicle?

- What will the level of service on the streets be in the future when we and all our neighbors are built out? Looks great now, but what about the future?
- When will missing arterial streets be finished? Is that a financial issue or development issue? *Gary Barberio informed the Committee that streets are built by or through development*
- Do other cities share the cost of roadways?
- How do we expand this road system to accommodate more pedestrian and bike demand if that is the objective?
- How much does heavy traffic discourage non-vehicle use
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- Can we have a parallel street for pedestrians and bikes?
- It will be a challenge to change the mindset about vehicle level of service.
- Freeway widening won't alleviate congestion, but if I-5 isn't expanded it will impact our streets.
- Need to address future traffic through other means other than widening roads, like I-5.
- In the future, we will have more demand for the airport, which will have a significant impact on traffic.

- More people flying from Palomar will decrease traffic on I-5 (fewer people driving to San Diego), but will increase traffic coming to Carlsbad.

Written Comments from Julie Baker, Committee Member, who was absent from the meeting

1. Lets make sure that pedestrians have an opportunity to walk. We have so often created cul-de-sacs with no connection to the "bulb" next door. We could make better use of paths, stairs, etc. I realize ADA plays a role here, but let's make sure that we are not interpreting ADA so strictly that we force people into cars when they could be walking/biking.
2. Citizens are not going to want to walk down a major arterial when the sidewalk is a few feet from cars traveling over 50 mph. It would be a benefit if we could separate cars from people a bit more or find a way to make the "walk" more pleasant.
3. Bike Lanes. Bike lanes are a part of many roadways. However, they've been engineered in a dangerous way. Many of the bike lanes are bumpy, have big drainage "things" that are very uneven and can cause fast riding cyclist accidents. As your maps show, there is vast potential for cycling in Carlsbad. Spend a Saturday morning and you'll count hundreds of riders moving through Carlsbad on CSBLD Blvd. Let's capitalize on this!
5. Carlsbad Blvd south of Cannon is a disaster with walker, runner, and bikers all in the same lane. We need to fix this soon!!!!
6. Too many of our neighborhood streets are designed to encourage cars to drive too fast. Big wide streets mean fast drivers. Let's redesign streets to discourage raceways
7. Put two pedestrian crossing over the railroad tracks...Chestnut and Beech!
8. Roundabouts. Drivers hate stopping way more than they hate going slow.
9. Try, try, and try to work with CUSD and other school districts to manage before/after school traffic. Perhaps more patrol/volunteer patrols at schools during morning/afternoon hours would help. Start a campaign to get people to walk to school.
10. It's not that traffic is so bad in Carlsbad it's that it takes too long to get places because of stops. Efforts to coordinate lights and traffic flows will improve the perception of traffic.